

# Something Fishy

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Summary: Set during Season 4 of TVD. While exploring the island, Elena, Bonnie, and Rebekah fall into the Moon Pool. After they return home and undergo some changes, they make an alliance to keep their new powers a secret. Luckily for them, Elena's cousin Emma, as well as Cleo, Rikki, and the guys are visiting Mystic Falls after Emma sees them swimming near the island.

## 1. The Mysterious Cave

### Ch. 1: The Mysterious Cave

In the caves, Bonnie and Jeremy were looking around. "Are you sure this is the right direction?" She asked him.

"I'm positive." Jeremy said. "There should be an opening somewhere around here."

"Well, I hope we find it fasâ€|" She broke off and screamed as a large piece of rock behind her broke off and she lost her balance, falling through the crack.

"Bonnie!" Jeremy ran over to the opening. "Bonnie, are you okay? Can you hear me?"

"Yeah, I'm down here!" She called. Jeremy pulled out a flashlight and looked into the large crack where she'd fallen, but he couldn't see anything.

"Where are you?" Jeremy called to her. "I can't see."

"I'm not sure." Bonnie said. "It looks like I'm in some part of the cave." She looked around her. She could see rock walls around her, what looked like some kind of staircase and a pool of water near her feet. When she looked up, she could see a huge opening in the cave ceiling, which was causing the sunlight to reflect in.

She ran a hand through the sunlight. "Where am I?" She wondered to herself. Suddenly, there was a splash. She looked at the pool of water, but she saw nothing there.

"Bonnie! Stay where you are! I'm going to find help!" Jeremy called down to her. He turned around and ran, retracing their steps from the cave. He finally found Elena leaning against a wall, recovering. Stefan was sitting next to her.

"Jeremy?" Elena asked. "What's going on?"

"Bonnie fell off a cliff." He explained. Elena looked at him in shock.

"Is she okay?" Stefan asked him, really concerned about Bonnie's safety.

"She's said she's okay." Jeremy told them. "I can show you where she fell."

At that moment, Damon and Rebekah arrived. "What's going on? Did you find the cure already?" Damon asked. Then he noticed the concern and worry on everyone's faces. "Is everything okay here?"

"Bonnie fell off a cliff." Elena told them.

"What happened?" Rebekah asked. She seemed genuinely worried.

"Well, we were walking through the caves when a rock slide came down behind her. She lost her balance." Jeremy explained.

"She's alive, though." Stefan added. "Jeremy's been talking with her. Do you know exactly where she is?"

"No, she said she's somewhere in the caves." Jeremy told him. "But I can show you where she fell."

"Lead the way, then." Rebekah said.

"You want to help us?" Elena asked, surprised by her change in attitude.

"Personally, if it was my choice, I'd rather make sure your friend was okay than continue this stupid mission to finding a cure that likely doesn't exist." Rebekah told them.

"Well, we better get going, then." Damon said. "Every second we waste here is another second that Bonnie's still stuck somewhere in the caves."

Jeremy carefully led the group to where Bonnie had fallen. "She was standing there when it happened." He said, pointing to where she fell. "I had my flashlight, but I couldn't see anything."

"But you can still talk with her, right?" Damon asked.

"Yeah. Hang on." He moved a few feet back from where Bonnie fell. "Bonnie? Can you hear me?" He called down there.

"Jeremy? What's going on up there?" The group seemed surprised to

hear Bonnie's voice.

"I brought help." He called back down to her. "Can you move or anything?"

"I'm not sure. I've just been sitting here, looking around the area. I think there was something down here with me."

"What do you mean?" Elena asked, calling down into the caves.

Bonnie looked around again. "I thought I heard something, but whatever it was is gone now." She called up.

"Okay, one of us should go down there and make sure she's okay." Stefan said.

"I'll go." Elena said. "I'm the reason we came here in the first place."

"Are you sure about this?" Damon asked her.

"Yes." She walked over to the edge. "Bonnie, I'm coming down! Hang in there!" She pushed off with all her strength and jumped.

She landed feet first, though stumbled slightly. "Still getting used to that."

"Elena?" She turned around. Bonnie was sitting down nearby, her legs stretched out in front of her.

"Are you okay?" Elena asked her.

"I'm not sure." Bonnie told her. Elena knelt down next to her and checked her for any signs of injury or broken bones. Bonnie winced slightly when she touched her ankle.

"It looks like your ankle's sprained." Elena said. She took off her denim jacket and used her powers to tear one of the sleeves off.

"I thought that was yourâ€|" She began.

"I can always get a new one." Elena told her. "You're hurt." She tightened the fabric around Bonnie's ankle. She'd learned a little about first aid from her parents. "Well, I think that should do it. Can you stand?"

"I think so." Bonnie said. She struggled to get to her feet, but after the first couple tries, she managed to get up. Elena held her for support.

"Okay, normally I'd woosh us up there, but I don't know if that's a good idea with you're ankle." Elena said.

"Yeah, that and we can't tell which up we're going to." Bonnie said. "Look up." Elena did and she could see the sky outside of one hole and a bunch of other crevasses above them.

"Is there another way out of here?" Elena asked her. Before Bonnie could respond, they heard a scream. Something had hit the ground, hard. They turned and saw the blonde Original, stretched out flat on

her stomach. Her arms were spread as though she'd tried to break her fall.

"Rebekah?" They asked in unison. She groaned in pain and slowly sat up.

"What the bloody hell!" She turned so that she was facing the girls now.

"What happened?" Elena asked.

"Damon pushed me." Rebekah told them. "Since you'd been down here a while, we were trying to figure out if anyone else should go down to make sure you two were alright. While the guys were arguing, I peeked near the edge, hoping I'd see something. The next thing I know, someone pushes me from behind."

"How do you know it was Damon?"

"Because before I fell I heard your brother and Stefan arguing and Damon was unusually quiet." Rebekah said. "I should've known he was up to his old tricks."

"Is everything okay down there?" They heard Stefan call down to them.

"We're all okay, except Bonnie's got a sprained ankle. There's no way we'll be able to get back up there." Elena called up.

"Even if we wanted to. It's like a maze down here." Rebekah said, looking around.

"Guys! Just get out of here!" Bonnie called upward. "We'll find another way out of the caves."

"Are you sure?" Jeremy asked.

"Yes. Once we find our way out, we'll meet you at the campsite!" Rebekah said. The girls looked around. The cave had gotten darker because it was now night outside. They could see the stars through the gaps in the cave's ceiling.

"How are we going to get out of here?" Bonnie asked after a few minutes.

"We'll find a way." Elena said. "Maybe one of us should look down that tunnel."

"I checked it while you were readjusting the fabric around her ankle." Rebekah told her, sitting next to them. "It doesn't really lead anywhere, apart from the jungle. It'd take forever to navigate through it in this darkness."

"I thought you guys had great night vision." Bonnie said.

"What supernatural books have you been reading?" Rebekah asked. Elena glanced over at the pool of water and got an idea.

"Hey, guys." Elena said, running her hand through the water. "I think I found a way out. Remember how in science class they talked about

underwater caves?"

"You think that pool leads to one that will get us out of here?" Bonnie asked.

"It's worth a try." Elena said. "I'm going to go down there to make sure though." She got up and started to walk toward the water, but hesitated.

"It's okay, I'll make sure she's safe." Rebekah told her. Elena nodded, knowing that she could trust her, and walked into the water. After a couple of minutes, she surfaced out of the water.

"There is an opening down here." Elena said. "If we get through it, we can swim back to the beach, to the camp site."

"I'm not sure if I'll be able to swim with my ankle." Bonnie said.

"Don't worry, we'll be right beside you the whole time." Rebekah told her. They both walked into the pool of water. Elena got on Bonnie's other side so that Bonnie was in the middle.

Just then, a full moon passed overhead. The water in the pool started glowing. They looked up and saw a bunch of light colored bubbles rise out of the pool.

"Wow." Elena said. It only lasted for a few seconds, but it was still amazing.

"I wish the guys were here to see this." Bonnie said. Rebekah was smiling.

"Okay, we better get going." Elena said. "Ready?" She counted to three and they all dove into the water. Bonnie struggled slightly, but Elena and Rebekah helped her. The three of them got through the small entrance and swam upwards, taking huge breaths when they surfaced.

"See? I told you we'd make it out." Elena said.

"You're surprisingly good at swimming." Rebekah said.

"I've been doing it since I was eight." Elena explained.

"So, do either of you know which way to the camp site?" Rebekah asked. Bonnie closed her eyes and focused.

"It's that way." Bonnie said. "Not too far from here, actually." They started swimming toward the beach. Once they got closer to the shore, the guys ran over to them and helped them back to the beach.

"Are you okay?" Jeremy asked.

"Yeah, we're fine." Bonnie said, relieved he was helping her walk back to camp.

"What were you guys doing in the water?" Damon asked, helping Elena.

"I'm surprised you're concerned." Rebekah said. "Since you're the reason I was in there in the first place."

"But you're all okay." Stefan pointed out, trying to keep the peace between the group.

"Yeah, but we should still get Bonnie's ankle checked out once we get home." Jeremy pointed out.

"So, any reason you decided to take a midnight swim?" Damon asked.

"We had to swim out a cave opening that was underwater." Elena told him.

"Good thing I packed a few towels in case something like this happened." Rebekah said. They headed into their tents, not knowing that things for them were about to change forever.

## 2. Transformation

The next day, everyone was back home in Mystic Falls. Elena lowered herself into the bathtub. After spending the last three days stuck on the island, she really needed to wash up. The good news was that Klaus had gotten out. She wasn't surprised to find out the cure they'd been looking for was a wild goose chase.

Just as she had gotten into the bathtub, her legs had started to feel really heavy. She moved her hand to see if she'd had pulled anything. (Of course, even if she had, her vampire powers would've healed her.) When she touched it though, she couldn't feel her legs.

She tried lifting her legs out of the tub, only to hear something flap. She sat up and saw that her legs had been replaced with an orange-gold tail. She looked down and saw she was also wearing a matching tank top.

As she was checking herself for any other unnatural things, she heard a knock at the door. "Elena?" She heard Jeremy call.

"Uh, I'll be out in a few minutes." Elena called back. "I just need to dry off." She hoped that once she was dry, she wouldn't have a fish tail anymore.

Bonnie had headed to the lake early that morning to get in some swimming practice. It was one of the few things that relaxed her, ever since all this witch stuff had started taking a toll on her.

She dived into the lake and relaxed, swimming around the lake's surface, when she felt it happen. She felt herself freeze for a few seconds. Then, she looked down to see herself wearing a tank top. She tried swimming again and found herself swimming way faster than normal. She ducked underwater to see that her legs were replaced by orange scales and a fin.

She surfaced and quickly glanced around to make sure no one else was there. When she noticed the coast was clear, she pulled herself out of the water and dried herself off with the towel. As soon as she was

dry, she was relieved to see that she was back to normal.

Back at her place, Rebekah got into the bathtub. After the entire hike through the island, she was tired and needed it. She added extra bubble bath to the tub and got in. Just as she was relaxing, she could feel something was very, very off.

Wondering what could've happened, she sat up slightly. The first thing she noticed was she was wearing an orange-gold halter top, which was a little unusual. Then she looked in front of her and saw that she had orange scales and fins where her legs and feet should've been.

She screamed and tumbled out of the bathtub. "Rebekah?" She heard a voice call. Crap! She'd forgotten that Elijah had stopped by to visit while she was gone. "Rebekah, is everything okay in there?"

"Don't come in here!" She yelled, not sure how to get out of this mess. She could hear his footsteps coming up the stairs. She quickly looked around and saw a towel on the counter. She grabbed it and threw it over her mermaid tail just as the door was opening.

Thankfully, all he saw was her lying on the ground with a towel over her legs. "I forgot that the water was full of vervain." Rebekah told him, thinking fast. "Burned myself pretty badly in there."

"Please do be more careful, sister." Elijah said. "There are still a lot of people out there that want to see us suffer."

"I know." Rebekah said. When he left, he closed the door. She sighed in relief and threw the towel off, seeing that she still had her tail.

Elena and Bonnie were walking through the town square. "It's weird, right?" Bonnie was asking. "One minute I'm swimming and the next I have fish scales."

"I know what you mean. When I was in the bathtub, the same thing happened." Elena told her.

"What the heck is going on?" Bonnie asked.

"I was hoping you could tell me." The girls turned and saw Rebekah walking over to them. "This morning, did anything weird happen when either of you went into the tub?"

"Wait, it happened to you, too?" Elena asked.

"What?"

"When I was in the bathtub, I had orange scales where my legs should've been." Elena told her.

"The same thing happened while I was swimming in the lake." Bonnie added.

"Me, too." Rebekah said, looking concerned. "Elijah almost caught me." They looked at her, surprised. "Long story."

"But why is it happening to us?" Bonnie asked.

"I don't knowâ€|Wait." Elena said, realizing something. "We were all on the island. Maybe we should ask the guys if anything's happened."

"Yeah, what happens if one of us gets splashed? What if we can't control the change?" Rebekah pointed out.

"We're going to have to be careful." Elena said. "As far as I know, it's just the three of us."

"Until we figure out what happened to us, we can't tell anyone." Bonnie said. "Not our friends, not our families, not evenâ€|"

"Hi guys!"

"Caroline!" Bonnie said, turning around, startled.

"I know you guys called and everything, but you said you'd tell me everything that happened on the island." Caroline said. The girls all looked at each other, nervously. "Oh, hi, Rebekah."

"Hello, Caroline."

"Uh, don't you have anywhere else to be?" Caroline asked. "No offense or anything, butâ€|"

"I'll leave you girls to your business, then." Rebekah said, clearly feeling left out of the group. She walked away.

Elena received a text message then:

Let's meet later-R

Elena discreetly showed the message to Bonnie, who nodded.

"So, what happened?" The girls were sitting outside the Grill.

"Well, the cure turned out to be a bust." Bonnie said.

"I suppose it's for the best." Elena said. "I mean, sure this vampire thing really sucks sometimes, but I like who I am. Besides, I'm okay with it."

"What about the sire bond?" Caroline pointed out. "In case you've forgotten, you're still sired to Damon."

"We'll find a way to break it." Bonnie said. "I know we will."

"It's not exactly like we're on speaking terms." Elena said. "Apart from when the guys helped us yesterday, we're still in this fight. Of course, now that we know the cure's fake, maybe it'll patch things up."

"Yeah, I still feel kind of bad about that though." Caroline said. "All those people we could've saved using it. You would've gotten your mother back, not to mention Stefanâ€|"

"And Rebekah." Bonnie added. "She wanted it more than any of us, you know."

"It's funny. Part of me actually wanted her to have it." Elena said. "With the kind of life she's had, I think she deserved to have the chance to be human."

"Okay, why are you guys standing up for that evil little bitch?" Caroline asked. "Have you both forgotten everything that she's done?"

"Of course not." Elena said. "I mean, she's the reason I turned in the first place. That, and I didn't know I had blood in my system at the time. But there's also a part of her that just wants to be normal. Something we can all understand, Care."

"I guess." Caroline said. She seemed angry, but a part of her did understand where they were coming from. "So, what happened on that island anyway to make you hate her less?"

"Well, when everyone else went missing, we had to team up." Elena explained. "And we managed to work out some of our differences."

"Shane led Jeremy and I to this cave." Bonnie said.

"Speaking of that creep, what happened to him?"

"I don't know. The last I saw of him, he had a broken leg." Bonnie said. "I have no idea if he got off the island with the rest of us." She turned to Elena, who shrugged. Either way, she was glad that Shane was out of her life. She was never going to practice Expression ever again.

"Rebekah helped me save Bonnie when she fell and hurt her ankle in the caves." Elena said.

"Anyway, what's going on with you?" Bonnie asked.

"Tyler ran off." Caroline told them. "He's afraid Klaus will try to kill him. I tried to talk both of them out of it, but Klaus wouldn't back off. So Tyler left. Thankfully, Klaus hasn't started hunting him down yet."

"Carolineâ€œ" Bonnie said. No wonder she seemed angrier than usual.

"I just hate this." Caroline said. "I hate Klaus for making him run again. I hate the fact that Tyler's left me. What if he doesn't come back this time?" Her voice broke on the last sentence and she started to cry.

"Hey, it'll be okay, Care." Elena said, taking her hand.

"Yeah, you two will work things out." Bonnie said.

"If there's one good thing about being a vampire, it's the fact that you always have time to make things right with each other." Elena said.

"I know, but it's only been a day and I miss him so much."

"Why didn't you go with him?" Bonnie asked.

"I couldn't." Caroline said. "I still need to finish high school, I have to graduate because I know my mom will kill me if I don't."

"You know we're here for you." Elena said. Taking her hand.

"Thanks, girls." Caroline said. Bonnie was tapping her glass, when suddenly, water exploded out of it. She quickly withdrew her wrist so she wouldn't get splashed. She and Elena shared a glance.

"You know what? Why don't we go to the park?" Bonnie suggested.

"Maybe it'll help you get your mind off things."

"Yeah, I guess." Caroline said. She got up and followed Bonnie.

"You coming?" She asked Elena.

"Actually, I think I'm going to catch up with Rebekah." Elena told them. "But I'll call you later, promise."

"I'll look forward to it." Caroline said.

Rebekah was sitting in her room when Elena arrived. "The doorbell works, you know." She pointed out.

"Sorry, but this was aâ€|you know, mermaid thing."

"I'm not really familiar with the term."

"That's why I brought this." Elena said, pulling a book out of her bag. She opened it to a page with a mermaid on it. "According to old fairy tales and folklore, mermaids were mythical creatures."

"Technically, we're supposed to be a myth, too." Rebekah pointed out. Elena nodded.

"Anyway, mermaids have the upper half of a human, but they have fish tails instead of legs or feet." Elena explained. "There are all these legends about how they have powers and abilities, like swimming up to a hundred miles an hour, for example."

"I think I see now. But why are you concerned about powers?"

"Because earlier, Bonnie's drink nearly exploded all over us." Elena said. "At least, we think it was her."

Rebekah walked over to her window. "Okay, so something weird is happening to us, but we knew that."

"I'm thinking if we can understand more about this, maybe we can control it." Elena said. "It's not like we have anyone else to turn toâ€|" She paused, looking at the window. "Was that glass frosted over before?" Rebekah looked at the window and found that it was, indeed, beginning to frost over. She removed her hand from the window

and it started to fade.

A few hours later, the three of them met at the lake. "Okay, something is definitely freaky about all this." Rebekah said.

"No kidding." Bonnie said. "Are you sure that it's us that's causing things to happen?"

"Well, we'll never know unless we try." Elena said. She walked to the edge of the lake, careful not to step in it. She placed her hand just above the water's surface and nothing happened.

"Maybe it is all in our heads." Rebekah said. "Maybe we're worried for me!" She was cut off by Bonnie's surprised gasp.

There was a small cloud of steam running off the lake, where Elena was. From where she was sitting, it the water was starting to bubble. She pulled her hand back and the steam slowly disappeared.

"That's a little strange."

"There has to be a logical explanation." Bonnie said. "Fog passes through this town all the time." Elena shivered, remembering the time she was surrounded by it on that first day of school.

Rebekah walked over to the lake next, placing her hand near the water. To her shock, it froze over. "What's your explanation for that?" She asked Bonnie.

"Won't it look suspicious if people look at a frozen lake in the middle of April?" Elena pointed out.

"Oops. Didn't think of that." Elena put her hand over the ice, warming the lake back to normal.

"There we go." Bonnie walked over to the lake. She looked nervous, but she placed her hand over the water and nothing.

"I guess witches are immune to mermaid powers." Bonnie said, dropping her hand.

"Or not." Rebekah said. "Look." Bonnie turned around to see that the water behind her had risen slightly. She put her hand back out and managed to levitate several bubbles at once.

"Okay, I know I couldn't do that before." She said.

"You know what?" Rebekah said, realizing something. "These abilities, they're all water related."

"It must have something to do with our mermaid transformation." Elena said. "We need to find out how this happened, maybe then we can understand more about this stuff."

"Okay, but what are we going to tell the others?" Bonnie asked.  
"They're bound to get suspicious sooner or later."

"We just pretend everything's normal." Rebekah said. "And maybe we shouldn't hang out so much at first. I hate to say it, but Caroline's right. It would look too suspicious if the three of us suddenly

became friends."

"True, but it's not exactly like we're enemies anymore." Elena pointed out.

"I don't like this anymore than you do, Elena, but if the rest of your friends see us hanging out, they'll know something's up." Rebekah said. She started to walk away. Elena watched her leave.

"Hey, we'll work this out." Bonnie told her. "After all, we do share the same secret."

"I know." Elena said. "I just feel bad about that. I never wanted us to be enemies, butâ€"

"I think deep down, she knows that. You know, it's weird. I always thought she was kind of jealous because you had a normal life."

"Well, I don't blame her..

"Anyway, I've been getting a bad feeling, like something's going to happen soon." Bonnie told her. "Is it okay if I stay at your place tonight?"

"You know you're welcome anytime, Bonnie." Elena said. "Besides, Jer's been worried about you since we got back."

"Really?" Bonnie knew she was blushing, but she was hoping her best friend wouldn't notice. She still had a crush on her brother, after all. "He knows I'm okay, right?"

"Yeah, well, you haven't been returning his calls." Elena pointed out.

"Kinda busy with the whole mermaid thing, remember? I can't exactly tell him that."

"Well, I'll just tell him that we were out doing girl stuff." Elena said. "He can understand that. Anyway, how's Caroline?"

"She's doing better." Bonnie said. "We were out shopping before you called. It's hard to believe that retail therapy actually works."

"Well, it is Care." The two of them continued talking as they walked home.

### 3. The Phone Call

Elena looked outside her window. Bonnie and Jeremy were talking in the guestroom, and she was sitting on her bench, thinking about how they'd get through their mermaid situation. She finished getting ready for bed, when her cell phone rang.

"Hello?"

"Hello, coz." She heard a voice say on the other end of the line. A

voice she hadn't heard in years, not since her parents died. The speaker had a clear, Australian accent.

"Emma? Is that you?" Elena asked.

"Who else would it be?" Yep, that was definitely her cousin, Emma Gilbert. Before her parents died, her family used visit in Australia every other summer.

"How are you?" Elena asked. "I haven't heard from you in such a long time."

"Well, the past few years I've been busy out here at the Gold Coast myself." Emma told her. "How have you been, you know, with everything?" She knew Elena's parents were dead. She'd even been to the funeral.

"Well, Jeremy and I have certainly had our challenges." Elena said. "But for the most part things are okay."

"I'm glad." Emma told her.

"How's Cleo?" Elena asked, remembering the girl who was always hanging out with them.

"Well, not much has changed." Emma told her. In the background, Elena could hear two people yelling at each other.

"You take that back!"

"You're the one who started this!"

"Sorry, Elena, give me a second." Emma said. Back at her house, Emma placed her phone face-down on her bed and got up to break up a fight that had broken out between Cleo and Rikki.

"Would you take it easy?" Rikki said, trying to restrain the other girl. "You're being overdramatic."

"This coming from a girl who pushed me into the river as a prank! I almost got exposed!" Cleo pointed out.

"Would you two knock it off? I'm trying to talk with my cousin." The blonde-haired, blue-eyed girl said, glaring at them. "Do you have any idea how long it's been since we've spoken?"

"Sorry, Emma." Cleo said.

"Is this the cousin that lives in America?" Rikki asked.

"Yeah, it's been a long time. Cleo and I used to spend our summers at the beach with them." Emma explained. "Now do you mind?" She sat down on her bed.

"Sorry, I had to deal with my friends." Emma said into the phone.

"It's no big deal." Elena said. "So, anyway, how's Cleo?"

"Hang on. I'll put you on speaker." Emma said. She pressed a button

on her phone and motioned for Cleo to come sit next to her. Cleo walked over and sat next to Emma on the bed. Rikki sat down in the chair nearby.

"Hi, Elena." Cleo said.

"Cleo? Wow, I remember how high your voice used to be."

"It's called puberty." Cleo said. "But it's good to hear from you again."

"How's everything going? Still dealing with the water thing?"

"I've managed to get over my fear, though I still don't like being near it." Cleo said. "And I got a job at Marine World, taking care of dolphins and other animals."

"Wow, that sounds amazing." Elena said.

"It is. Oh, and I have a boyfriend now!"

"Really? That's great!"

"Yeah, it's pretty cool." Emma said. "The three of us have boyfriends."

"Three of you?"

"Oh, right. I haven't told you about Rikki yet. She transferred to our school a couple years ago." Emma explained. "She's a bit of a tomboy, but also one of the most loyal friends I know." Rikki smiled.

"She sounds like an awesome friend." Elena said.

"She is. Anyway, I thought I saw you swimming near Mako Island the other night."

"Mako Island? Isn't that just off the coast of your hometown?" Elena vaguely recalled the details and at the same time knew that Shane had lied to them about their location.

"Yeah, uh, my family was camping out nearby and I thought I saw you." Emma told her.

"Emma, how much do you know about this island?" Elena asked, wondering if she possibly knew how to help them.

"Well, I know a lot about the mythology. You know what, it's too complicated to explain over the phone." Emma said. Then she got an idea. "You know what, my friends know a little about the island as well. I'm thinking we should come over to you to talk about it."

"Wait, really? You're coming to Mystic Falls?" Elena asked. She hadn't seen her cousin in ages, and it'd be a good time for them to catch up with each other. Plus, if she knew about the island's mythology, maybe she could help them figure things out.

"Of course. Out by us, we're on break." Emma said. "Besides, we've

been meaning to visit anyway."

"Well, I look forward to meeting you guys." Elena said. "I'll see you soon."

Emma hung up from her line at home. "Well, looks like we're headed to Mystic Falls, Virginia." She said.

"Are you sure this is a good idea?" Cleo asked.

"If she knows about the Moon Pool, I think we have to help her. After all, she is my cousin." Emma said.

"I don't know. Things are finally in a good place with me and Zane." Rikki said.

"So? I'm inviting Lewis and Ash along, what's one more guy?" Emma asked.

"Really? The guys are coming, too?" Cleo asked, excited. She and Lewis had been dating for almost two years now and he was their closest friend.

"Of course. I hope they can all come, though." Emma said. "I think it'd be helpful to have them around. The last time I spoke with my cousin, there were a rash of animal attacks breaking out near the woods."

"Well, hopefully we'll never go camping, then." Cleo said.

"Still superstitious, huh?" Rikki teased.

"Hey, it's creepy that an animal would attack random people that are out in the woods." Cleo pointed out.

"Newsflash, Cleo, you are a mermaid. You could probably defend yourself." Rikki said.

"As long as we're in this together, nothing bad can happen." Emma pointed out. "The three of us have always been a team and even with the guys tagging along, we should be able to help her out."

#### 4. Meeting the Mermaids

A few days later, Elena and Jeremy were on their way to pick up Bonnie and Rebekah. "So, why are we bringing Rebekah with us?"

"Because she's the one who helped us escape the underground tunnel on that island." Elena said. "And it'd be a good opportunity for her to meet some new people. Emma's bringing her entire group."

"Still, I'm surprised you guys didn't invite Caroline along."

"Actually, Bonnie did. She said she'd meet us at the airport, though." Elena said.

Jeremy's phone started ringing. He looked at it. "It's

April."

"Since when are you two hanging out?" Elena asked him.

"Well, I've been a little behind in class lately. She's just tutoring me." Jeremy said. "Besides, I'm back with Bonnie."

This was news to Elena. "When did that happen?"

"The other night, when Emma called." Jeremy said. "Speaking of, it was nice of you to let them stay with us."

"Just the girls are staying." Elena said. "When Emma called back last night, she said their boyfriends were coming with them."

"I'm sure we'll figure something out." Jeremy said. He headed down the street to take the call. Elena kept walking and almost bumped into someone.

"Sorry."

"Hey." She looked up and saw Damon in front of her.

"Oh, hi." Elena said.

"We haven't seen you the last few days, we were getting kind of worried that something happened."

"I'm sorry, I've just been busy, planning for my cousin and her guests arrival." Elena told him.

"Are you sure you don't want some company on your way?"

"Thanks, but Jer and I already have a small group coming along." Elena said. "That, and we haven't seen her since our parentsâ€œ! She trailed off.

"I can see how important this is to you."

"And I'd like to keep them out of the supernatural if I can." Elena told him. "I probably won't get back until late."

"No problem. I've got some investigating to do, anyway." Damon said.

"What's up?"

"I think Professor Creepy might have survived. Liz and Meredith called, thought they saw him in town. I want to see for myself if it's true, cause if it is, we might have trouble. Later."

Elena watched as he walked away, concerned about the news.

"Okay, I think we're all set." Jeremy said. "We better get the girls."

A few minutes later, the girls met at Rebekah's place. "So, why are we picking up your Australian cousin at the airport?" Rebekah asked.

"Cause she might know about what's happened to us." Elena said. "At the least, she and her friends know something about that island Shane tricked us into going to."

"Not to mention, it'd be great to see her and Cleo again." Bonnie said. She'd joined the Gilberts for one of their vacations down there.

"Well, we better get going so that we can meet the group." Elena said, looking at the time.

About an hour later, the group had arrived at the airport. "Elena, over here!" She saw Caroline waving to her. To her surprise, Matt and Stefan had shown up, too.

"What are you guys doing here?" Elena asked them.

"Caroline told us your cousin was coming into town." Matt said.

"So, have they shown up yet?" Jeremy asked.

"No, and honestly, I'm not sure who we're looking for."

"It shouldn't be too hard. She has long, blonde hair, fair skinâ€|you know what, I have a picture on my phone." Elena pulled it up and showed it to the group. She vaguely looked familiar, but the picture was slightly blurry.

"So, when's her flight come in?" Bonnie asked. Jeremy turned to the board.

"According to this, we've got another five or ten minutes." Jeremy said.

"How come you don't talk about her anymore?" Caroline asked.

"Umâ€|cause Jeremy and I haven't seen her since we lost our parents, and then some things happened in our lives, so..."

"Oh, right."

"So, what's she like?" Stefan asked.

"We're actually not that different." Elena said. "She used to be a competitive swimmer in her hometown."

"What? No way." Bonnie said. "She always seems so busy."

"Well, you know how super-organized she is." Elena said.

"Wait, we're hanging out with a perfectionist?" Rebekah asked. Caroline rolled her eyes at the irony of her statement.

"Actually, she really was the champion of the girls' swim team a couple years back."

"I've even got the medals to prove it." A voice said, interrupting them.

The group turned toward the direction it came from. There were three girls and three guys standing nearby. Elena recognized the blonde in the center of the group immediately. "Emma?"

"Elena." The blonde said, breaking into a smile. "It's so good to see you again." Elena ran over to her and hugged her. Jeremy walked over to her as well. "Jeremy! Wow, you've really gotten taller since the last time I saw you."

"So have you. Guess the swim team was good for you." Jeremy said.

"That, and I do a lot of running." Emma told him. The rest of the group approached Emma and her friends.

"So, you're the famous Emma Gilbert." Matt said.

"Yeah, that's me." Emma said, smiling. "And you must be Matt. Are you two stillâ€|"

"Wow, it has been a long time." Elena said. "We're not together anymore. In fact, my love life's kinda complicated right now."

"Bummer." The guy with black hair said. The other blonde elbowed him in the stomach. "Ow!"

"Be nice, will you? That's our mate's cousin." Rikki told him.

"Right, sorry."

"Ignore him, sometimes he can be really shallow." The girl standing near them said. Her skin was tan and she her brown hair in a ponytail. She was wearing a purple dress with a matching cardigan. Bonnie got a sense of dÃ©jÃ vu from her and stepped closer. Then she remembered.

"I remember you." Bonnie said. "That one time at the beach. I saved you from drowning."

"Bonnie? Is that you?" The girl asked, surprised.

"It's nice seeing you again, too, Cleo." Bonnie said.

"Wow, you've grown so much." Cleo said, looking at her.

"So have you." Bonnie pointed out.

"How do you know each other?" Zane asked.

"Bonnie tagged along on one of our family vacations." Jeremy explained.

"It was the year my parents got divorced." Bonnie said.

"Well, that's something we have in common, then." Cleo said. "But I'm doing okay."

"Hate to break this up, but we need to get our luggage." The blonde

guy with Emma's group said.

"Go ahead. We'll all meet outside." Elena told them.

Fifteen minutes later, they were all outside by an outdoor sitting area, under the shade of the trees.

"So, care to introduce us?" Emma asked.

"I was thinking you should go first." Elena said. "I mean, you're the one who came out here, you know."

"How about you both just get on with it?" Rikki asked her.

"Well, this is Emma." Elena told the others.

"And I'm sure some of you know my good friend, Cleo." Emma said. Cleo waved to them.

"And this is Rikki."

"How do you do?" The blonde asked them.

"How long have you known each other?" Caroline asked.

"About two years." Emma said.

"She's a bit of a rebel, but she's also the most loyal friend we've ever had, no matter how crazy things get." Cleo added.

"Well, it's nice to meet you, Rikki." Elena said.

"Same here. Emma's said a lot of good things about you." Rikki said.

"And this is my boyfriend, Ash." Emma said, touching his arm. He nodded to her.

"How did you meet?"

"Believe it or not, we worked together at the JuiceNet CafÃ©." Ash said. "Most amazing and challenging girl I've ever met." Emma blushed.

"And the other guys?" Bonnie asked.

"I'm Lewis!" The blonde began to speak.

"Wait, Lewis McCartney?" Jeremy asked.

"I remember you. He would sometimes hang out with us at the beach." Elena explained to the others. "He used to carry a sketchbook with him everywhere, drew the most amazing pictures."

"You're the reason I started drawing in the first place." Jeremy said, remembering how he'd given him drawing lessons when they were kids. "What are you up to these days?"

"Well, I'm more into studying science than being an artist." Lewis said.

"Yeah, but not while we're going out together, right?" Cleo pointed out. She kissed him on the cheek. She turned to the others. "We've been best friends sinceâ€¦forever, really. Over time, we just realized we were something more."

"Lewis is also a very close friend of ours." Emma explained. "He is one of the nicest guys you'll ever meet. And finally, we have Zane."

"Hey." He nodded to them.

"He's dating Rikki." Emma told them. "So, all of you know Elena."

"And her group?"

"Well, these are my friends. Bonnie and Caroline." Elena said.

"Hi." They said.

"And this is Matt."

"Hey."

"And that's Stefan." Elena said. "We used to date."

"So, it's not awkward?" Rikki asked.

"Rikki!" Emma exclaimed.

"No, it's fine." Elena told her. "It was kind of awkward at first and there are still moments, but at the end of the day, Stefan's still one of the closest people in my life."

"What about you?" Zane asked, facing the Original girl.

"I'm Rebekah."

"Whoa." Emma said, looking closely at her. "Have we everâ€¦met before?"

"I doubt it." Rebekah said. "I just moved here a year ago."

"Where from?" Rikki asked.

"Well, my family's done a lot of traveling around the States. It's hard to keep track of." Rebekah told them.

"I can relate. I've moved three times before attending the same school as these two." Rikki said. Emma and Cleo seemed surprised. She hadn't mentioned that to them.

"We're all pretty close." Elena said.

"Though some of us are still getting used to Bekah," Matt admitted. "She's still new to the group."

"I understand. It took us a little while to get used to Rikki." Emma said.

"Well, before you guys, I never had a group of close friends." Rikki pointed out.

"At least you didn't get off on the wrong foot with them." Rebekah said.

"Yeah, some of us don't really get along." Caroline admitted. "We're trying to adjust, though."

"Anyway, we could all go back to my place so that we can help the girls settle in." Elena said.

"What about us?" Zane pointed out.

"I've got an idea." Matt said. "I wasn't going to say anything at first, butâ€|"

"Yeah, Matt?" Caroline asked.

"Well, Tyler left a note, he gave me the deed to his house and everything." Matt explained. "I'm thinking we can let the guys stay there."

"Who's Tyler?" Ash asked them.

"He's â€|he's my boyfriend." Caroline said. "Heâ€|had to go out of town. We're kind of long-distance right now and I don't know if he's coming back, so, there's that." Everyone was looking at her.

"Um, Care, why don't you come with me? I think you dropped your purse in the waiting area." Stefan said, getting up. Caroline followed him.

"Can you tell us more about this guy who's house your staying in?" Zane asked Matt.

"He's one of my best friends." Matt said. "Sure, he could be a real jerk at times, but at the end of the day, he'd always come through for us when we needed him."

"Okay, so I say we go help get the group settled in." Jeremy said.

A few hours later, Matt, Jeremy, and Caroline were helping the guys move their stuff into the Lockwood's house.

"Wow. This place is huge." Zane said. He turned to Matt. "Does your friend really live here?"

"Yeah, it's a little bigger than what you're probably used to." Matt said.

"How long have you been staying here?"

"A couple of days." Matt said. "Ty left in a hurry."

"Don't you have anywhere else to go?"

"No. My mom walked out on us a long time ago and my sister's dead." Matt said.

"Oh. Sorry." Zane said, looking sincere.

"It's okay. I miss Vicki sometimes, but when she was around, she would always push me to do what I believed in." Matt explained.

"She sounds amazing."

"Well, she was. Though she could be a little on edge most of the time."

"The world's a tough place sometimes." Zane pointed out. "I've had plenty of arguments with my father. While things are better between us, there's still some issues. Lewis and the girls actually helped me keep him from building a property on this island near our town."

"What were you guys protesting?" Matt asked as he picked up a bag from where Zane dropped it.

"You know, usual stuff, environmental destruction, protecting the marine life around the area." Zane explained.

"Wow. You don't really seem like the environmental type."

"Well, it was important to my friends, so that makes it important to me." Zane said, picking up his other bag and following Matt upstairs.

Lewis almost dropped a box, but Caroline picked it up.

"Thanks."

"No problem." She helped him carry it upstairs.

"You're definitely the strongest girl I've ever met." Lewis said.

"What's in here anyway? Weights?"

"It's a microscope." Lewis said. "I'm interested in biology."

"Not exactly my scene." Caroline said.

"I figured. Rikki isn't too big on it either." Lewis said. She helped him carry it into one of the house's many guest rooms.

"Well, not many girls are interested in biology."

"Believe me, I know." Lewis said. "Everyone has their own interests, though. What about you?"

"Well, I always thought of becoming an actress." Caroline told him. "Though I have a lot of interests. It's hard to tell what I'll go into for college."

"Yeah, that's always a tough one to figure out."

"Dude, how much stuff did you pack?" Jeremy asked, helping Ash pick

up heavy piece of luggage.

"Just my clothes, some books, and sports equipment." Ash told him, trying to help him lift it up. Finally, they both managed to carry it inside and set it near the doorway.

"Emma's talked a lot about you and your sister the past few days." Ash said.

"Really?" Jeremy said, picking up a small suitcase.

"She says you're similar to Lewis." He told him. "In that you're both pretty good at figuring things out."

"Well, that's true." Jeremy said. "Although math is not my strongest area."

"No one's perfect." Ash said. "Once when we were working, I blamed Emma for something that went wrong. It turned out to be a computer error. We didn't get along so well at first, believe me."

"It's hard to believe you guys didn't get along with the way you look at her." Jeremy said.

"You noticed?" Ash asked. Jeremy nodded. "Well, sometimes, when you get to know someone, you get really close with them."

"Yeah, I totally get it, man." Jeremy said, thinking of Bonnie.

Meanwhile, Elena and Bonnie brought the girls to the Gilbert house. "Wow. It's exactly as I remembered it." Emma said as she and the girls walked in with their luggage.

She looked around the familiar living room. She and her family had come up to visit Elena and her family during spring break, about four years ago. Before she had become a mermaid.

"It's nice." Rikki said, glancing at a frame hanging on the wall.

"Yeah, it is." Elena said. "I just wish my parents were still here."

"What happened to Aunt Jenna?" Emma asked.

"She's gone, too." Elena explained. "We had a legal guardian for a few months. But we've been coping for almost a year now."

"Well, good thing you still have us." Bonnie said, putting an arm around her shoulder.

"You guys have been friends a long time, haven't you?" Rikki asked.

"We've been friends since we were kids." Elena said. "We all were. Then Stefan transferred in last year and we got close with him, too."

"Forgetting someone?" Everyone jumped in shock and turned toward the

source of the voice.

"Ugh, Damon, what are you doing here?" Elena asked.

"Aren't you going to introduce me to your friends?"

"Who the heck is this guy?" Cleo asked.

"Guys, this is Damon. He's Stefan's brother." Bonnie answered for Elena, who was at a loss for words.

"And he was just leaving." Elena said, managing to find the words somehow. "Right?" She turned to him.

"I have to tell you something."

"Can it wait?" Elena asked. "The girls haven't even unpacked yet."

"Right. I'll call you later." He left.

"He's strange." Rikki said.

"They have kind of a weird thing going on." Bonnie explained. "They're into each other, but it'sâ€!"

"Complicated?" Cleo supplied. "Yeah, I know the feeling. All relationships are a little complicated."

"Hey, what happened to Rebekah?" Rikki asked.

"I think she went home." Elena said.

"Probably for the best." Bonnie whispered to her. "She wouldn't be able to get in unless Jeremy was here."

"Well, we have plenty of room upstairs." Elena told the group. "Come on, I'll show you." She led the group upstairs and they looked around.

"Ugh, this room is a mess." Rikki said. Elena walked over to her.

"Yeah, actually, that's Jeremy's room."

"Oh. That explains things."

The group headed into the guest room. "This room is exactly how I remember it." Emma said. "Except the walls are green now."

"Well, we may have done a little redecorating after the accident." Elena explained. "And it was the only color we could find that hadn't spilled all over the garage floor."

"It's definitely an improvement over that blue and purple flower wallpaper." Emma said.

"So, how are we doing this?" Rikki asked. "Do we stay in the same room or should we do separate ones?"

"As far as I see it, we're all under the same roof either way." Cleo said. "So I'm leaving it up to you two."

"Why not?" Emma said. "We practically all lived in the same house back home anyway."

"Okay, guess we'll be rooming together." Cleo said. "It'll be like old times."

"Okay." Elena said. "Just let one of us know if you need us to help you guys with anything." She said.

"We will." Emma said. "Thanks for letting us stay here."

"Hey, we're family, Emma. You know I'd do anything to help you and the girls out." Elena pointed out. She walked out of the room, with Bonnie following close behind her.

"You two are just as close as ever." Cleo said.

"I know. That's why I think we have to tell her." Emma said. "If it really was Elena and Bonnie that were in the Moon Pool that nightâ€|"

"Are you sure someone was there and you weren't just seeing it?" Rikki asked.

"I know what I saw, Rikki." Emma told her. "They were swimming toward the shore, as though they'd come out of the underwater entrance of the pool."

"And if they're like us, we have to help them." Cleo said. "We're the only ones who know about the changes they'll be going through."

Downstairs, Bonnie and Elena were talking. "Are you sure you don't want to stay the night? I'm sure Jeremy wouldn't mind." Elena said.

"Thanks, but four girls in one house is crowded enough. Besides, I promised my dad I'd be home before it got late." Bonnie told her.  
"So, when do we talk to them about...what happened?"

"I think we should give them a few days." Elena said. "After all, it's not like we want to drop our other secrets on them right away, either."

"I think it's a good call." Bonnie said. "Well, I'll see you tomorrow." She turned to leave, then remembered something. "Oh, wait. I'm meeting Care at the Grill tomorrow."

"Hey, we can meet later if we have to." Elena pointed out. "I hate keeping things from her, but if she finds out about this, she'll want answers that we don't have."

"I can cover if I have to." Bonnie told her. "Trust me, she won't find out until we're ready to tell her." She walked out of the house. Elena turned and headed back upstairs, to get ready for bed herself. Hopefully they'd be able to figure things out before the others started getting suspicious.

## 5. Getting to Know You

The next day, Emma woke up to find herself alone. There was a knock at the bedroom door. "Come in." She said.

"Hey." Elena said, entering the room.

"Hey."

"Bonnie and Caroline took the girls out shopping. They didn't want to wake you up." Elena said.

"Well, I've always been a bit of a late sleeper on the weekends." Emma said. "At least, when the ones where I wasn't working the weekend shift at the cafÃ©."

"Kind of like Jeremy after he started working at the Grill." Elena said. She sighed.

"Everything okay?"

"Lately, it feels like Jeremy and I have grown apart." Elena told her. "We're just not as close as we used to be."

"I understand. Remember Elliot?" Emma asked. Elena nodded. Elliot was Emma's kid brother. He was pretty nice, though slightly annoying. "We weren't that close to begin with, but still, he's my family and I'll always have his back, no matter how things change."

"Yeah, you're right." Elena smiled. "I just feel like everything's been changing so much lately."

"Well, you'll always have me and Jeremy, plus your friends." Emma pointed out. "If you ever need someone to talk with about this, you have me."

"Thanks."

In town, Bonnie, Caroline, Rikki, and Cleo were walking to the Grill. They were all holding shopping bags. "These sunglasses are really going to look great on us." Rikki said.

"I know. That's why I bought an extra pair for Emma." Cleo said. "Lucky they had them in that color."

"You just need to know where to look." Caroline said.

"Well, you sound like an expert at this stuff." Rikki said.

"Please, if there was a class on fashion, I'd totally pass it." Caroline said.

"Did I ever tell you guys about that phase where she was obsessed with giving makeovers?" Bonnie asked them.

"Hey, you loved it when I gave you one." Caroline pointed out, playfully hitting her arm.

"To be fair, I was still wearing reading glasses at the time." Bonnie explained to them.

"I wear those." Cleo said. "Some of the books have surprisingly small print."

"Oh, I know."

"Wow, looks like Cleo's found her soul twin, or whatever its called." Rikki said.

"I know this can be hard sometimes." Caroline told her. "Sometimes, I'm not as close with Bonnie or Elena as they are with each other."

"I feel the same way. Then again, being the new girl in the group has disadvantages." Rikki said.

"Though not all of us trust the new guys." Caroline said.

"Are you talking about Rita again?"

"It's Rebekah, and I kind of have personal reasons for not liking her." Caroline said. "She'll go for any guy who isn't taken-though she did attempt to go after my boyfriend once."

"Maybe you should cut her some slack. From the little I know of her, it sounds like she's trying to fit in." Rikki said. "I know how hard that is. Maybe you should get over yourself."

"Whoa, Rikki! Remember what we talked about on the way here." Cleo said.

"Right, sorry." She walked ahead of the group.

"I'm really sorry. She always says what's on her mind, speaking before she thinks." Cleo explained.

"How do you deal with her?"

"She's my friend. And I know she can be harsh, but when it comes down to it, she has a good heart." Cleo told her. "Besides, she gets tense around new people."

"Yeah, I can see that." Caroline said. The girls sat down at a table outside.

"Can I help you?"

"Matt, you work here?" Cleo asked.

"Yeah, I guess I forgot to mention that." Matt said. "So, can I get you anything?"

Meanwhile, Zane and Lewis were headed through the park. Emma had texted them the directions to Elena's house. "So, why are we bringing them our notes about Mako Island again?"

"Because Elena's been asking about it and Emma wants to help her cousin out." Lewis said. "Besides, if she was anywhere near the Moon

Pool that night like Emma said!"

"You think there's a possibility that her cousin wasâ€|you know," Zane lowered his voice. "Turned into a mermaid?"

"We've all considered that possibility." Lewis said. "We're just polite enough not to say it."

"Sorry, but you have to admit it's a little weird. Those two are so similar to each other." Zane pointed out.

"Remind me why Ash stayed behind?" Lewis asked, wishing he'd asked him to come along instead.

"He took the other guys out. Said something about teaching them how to handle a tennis racket properly. I didn't even know this place had a tennis court."

"Whoa, what's your hurry?" The guys looked up. Rebekah was standing there. They'd almost run into her, literally.

"Sorry, Bekah. Didn't see you there." Lewis said.

"You can tell them apart?" Zane whispered. Lewis shoved him lightly, annoyed.

"So, what brings you to the park?" Lewis asked.

"Sometimes I come out here to walk, think about things." Rebekah explained. "It's not like I'm exactly winning friends these days. That's why I like it out here. I can get away from what everyone else thinks. That, and I've always loved watching the flowers bloom in spring."

"Yeah, I know what you mean." Lewis said. "It's why I used to check out the tide pools back home."

"So, you guys look like you're in a hurry. Where are you headed?"

"Your friend Elena's house." Zane told her. "We have some research papers to give Emma."

"Though her directions were a bit fuzzy. It was a really bad phone connection." Lewis said.

"I know where she lives." Rebekah said. "Just stick with me, guys. I'll show you where she lives."

Meanwhile, Emma and Elena were sitting in the living room when Cleo and Rikki returned. Bonnie followed behind them. "Hey, guys."

"Where's Caroline?" Elena asked.

"She went home. Said something about spending the afternoon with her mother." Rikki said.

"Speaking of which, is she still an officer?" Emma asked.

"Sheriff, actually." Elena corrected.

"Wow. That's cool." Cleo said.

Just then, there was a knock at the door. "That must be Lewis." Emma said. Elena got up to answer the door. Lewis was there, but Rebekah and Zane were with him.

"What are you doing here?"

"Just giving these guys directions. They couldn't even find your place without my help." Rebekah explained.

"I'll have you know that I'm more than capable of reading a map, lady." Zane said.

"Zane, enough." Lewis said. "Is Emma here?" Emma came to the door then.

"Hi, guys." Emma turned to Elena. "The girls and I need a moment with them. You don't mind, do you?"

"Go ahead." Elena said. The guys headed in, but Rebekah remained outside.

"Aren't you coming in?" Lewis asked.

"Um, I'll catch up with you guys later. I'm not exactly welcome here." Rebekah said. Elena looked at her. Making up her mind, she called Jeremy down from upstairs.

"What is it?" Jeremy asked.

"You need to invite Rebekah in." Elena whispered. He looked at her like she was crazy. "The others don't know, remember? And I don't want them to get suspicious."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes."

"Fine. Rebekah, get in here." Jeremy said.

"Thank you." Rebekah said, smiling at Elena.

"Look, I know we're not really friends, but we're in this together." Elena said.

"Well, it's still nice to be part of something. So, how are things with your cousin?"

"We've been comparing stories about high school." Bonnie explained. "And how different our school systems are."

"Tell me about it. They get out at early, we're stuck at school until four." Elena said. "Not counting cheerleading practice."

"It really does seem like another world." Rebekah said.

"Maybe you should come with us when we visit next time." Elena told

her. "It's not like we're just going to sit around here all summer."

"So, you brought the maps and notebooks?" Emma was asking Lewis.

"It's all in there." Lewis said. "I know, I double-checked."

"Thank you so much, guys. Maybe this will help us answer their questions." Cleo said.

"Speaking of, am I the only one who noticed that Emma and Rebekah look alike?" Zane asked.

"No, we noticed," Rikki said. "We're just nice enough not to say anything about it."

"We don't look that similar." Emma said. "My skin tone's slightly darker than hers."

"She has a point there." Cleo pointed out. "I've noticed it, too." She added defensively when the rest of the group looked at her.

"Well, I hope you guys are careful."

"Hey, if we're right about Elena, we might not need to hide it much longer." Rikki said.

"We don't tell her until the time's right, though." Emma said. Everyone nodded in agreement.

They headed back into the living room. Lewis and Zane left, since the others invited them to a basketball game. "Everything okay?" Rebekah asked.

"Yeah, everything's fine." Cleo said. "So, how's everything going down here?"

"We were just talking about graduation." Elena said. "It's coming up in a couple months, you know."

"You know we'll all be there cheering for you." Emma said. Elena smiled.

"So, what's up with you guys?" Bonnie asked.

"Well, you wanted to know about Mako, right?" Emma said. "We were just gathering a few things that could help us explain."

A few minutes later, the six of them were sitting in a circle around the living room table. Emma and Rikki had laid out the map on the table. "Okay, so Mako Island is located here." Emma made a red circle around the island with a marker.

"What's that land mass over there?" Rebekah asked, indicating it with her finger.

"That's where we live, actually." Rikki told her. "The Gold Coast is about a good two hundred miles off the coast, though it's rumored

that there might small underwater tunnels and shortcuts from other locations around the globe."

"Wow." Bonnie said.

"For as long as I can remember, there have been all these rumors about the island." Cleo said. "No one ever went there. Some believed it may have been haunted."

"Not to mention there's a huge shark breeding ground around there." Emma said.

"Sharks?" Bonnie asked.

"It's true, Zane encountered some of them before." Rikki said. "But there's also all these rare fish and plants that grow there."

"We think it was abandoned so that the wildlife could be preserved." Emma said.

"Are there legends of anything supernatural about the island?" Elena asked.

"Well, that's hard to tell." Rikki said. Emma and Cleo looked at her. "No one's gotten close enough to start telling ghost stories. Although they say sometimes when a full moon passes over the volcano, strange things can happen."

"Interesting." Rebekah turned to Bonnie. "So that professor of yours led us to that island under a lie?"

"How were any of us supposed to know?" Bonnie pointed out. "Last I checked, you fell for it, too."

"Okay, this is not the time to argue about it." Elena pointed out.

"You know, why don't we take a walk?" Cleo suggested. "It might help."

A few hours later, the group was walking near a dock a few feet away from Wickery Bridge. "I still can't believe Aunt Jenna's gone." Emma said.

"I know. It hit us pretty hard, too." Elena said. "She was the closest family member we had left."

"Yeah, but you guys are doing okay." Emma said. "You're lucky to have your friends to help you." Elena smiled. "So, is Jeremy still into card tricks?"

"I don't know. You're going to ask him."

"Figured as much. I practiced with Lewis for nothing."

"So, you and Jeremy." Cleo said as they stopped near the edge of the dock.

"Yeah, it was kind of weird," Bonnie said. "But when you really love someone, after a while, that part kind of goes away."

"I know what you mean. Lewis and I have had our share of rough patches over it." Cleo admitted. She blushed.

"Are you kidding me?" Rikki asked. "How have you not heard of any of these music bands?"

"Well, I'm just not really into music." Rebekah told her. "Occasionally, I'll hear a song I like, but I don't really know of any of the people who write or sing them."

"That settles it, someday I am dragging you to a concert with me." Rikki said. "You have a lot to learn about these music groups." The others laughed.

"Hey, easy, Rikki." Emma said. "We all have our differences."

"Yeah, you're telling me." Bonnie said. Suddenly, they heard a splash. As though on cue, all of them stepped or jumped back to avoid getting wet.

"Are you okay?" Emma asked Rikki. She nodded. Elena did a quick head count.

"Where's Cleo?" Elena asked.

"Guys!" They heard the voice come from the water. Emma and Rikki looked at each other. They looked and saw Cleo had fallen into the lake. Luckily, Cleo hadn't transformed yet, but she would in a few more seconds.

"There's no way to cover it up." Emma whispered. "The girls are too close."

"So what do we do?" Rikki asked.

"We don't have a choice." Emma said. "We have to!" Just then, Elena's group came over.

"Cleo, are you okay?"

"Don't!" Cleo said, backing away when Rebekah got closer. "Your eyes. They turned red." Elena and Bonnie looked at Rebekah.

"How did you not notice?" Elena asked her.

"Sometimes it happens unconsciously." Rebekah told her. "Like when I'm stressed."

"Oh my God." Bonnie said. They turned and faced her direction, but she was looking at the water. Emma and Rikki held hands in support. Right there, near the edge of the lake, Cleo had turned into a mermaid. Elena looked surprised.

"No way." Rebekah said. Elena turned to Emma and Rikki.

"We can explain." Emma told her.

"Yeah, we have to tell you something, too." Elena said. "Maybe you should go first."

"It's a long story." Rikki said.

"Well, you can explain while we try to get Cleo out of there." Bonnie said.

## 6. No Ordinary Girls

Elena walked over to the edge of the lake and tried to pull Cleo out of the water. "Elena." Emma began.

"It's okay. I think I can do this." Elena said. She took Cleo's hand and tried to pull her out. Suddenly, she lost her balance and fell in.

"Elena, are you okay?" Bonnie asked. She and Rebekah were still standing close to the edge. However, Emma and Rikki had backed away from it. A few seconds later, Elena surfaced from the water. She had changed into a mermaid as well.

"It was her." Emma said quietly, surprised to see her cousin had a mermaid tail now.

"We'll get something to pull you out." Bonnie told them.

"It's fine." Cleo said. "We can pull ourselves out." Bonnie turned to Emma and Rikki.

"So, mermaids, huh?"

"It all started two years ago." Emma said. Elena and Cleo had gotten out of the lake and were tried off by now, back to normal. The group were all sitting underneath a tree nearby. "We got stuck on Mako Island after taking Zane's speed boat for a joy ride."

"You have to admit, that was fun, though." Rikki said.

"Anyway, once we got there, we found this secret cave after walking around the jungle for seemed what seemed like forever." Cleo told them. "We came across this pool of water."

"It turned out to be an underwater cave." Emma added. "Our only way out of there and off the island was to swim out the tunnel."

"The second we entered the pool, though, the full moon passed overhead." Rikki said. "It made the water glow and rise slightly. Afterward, we followed Captain Emma to safety."

"It wasn't until the next morning we realized what had happened to us." Emma said. "Now every time we touch water, even on dry land, we turn into mermaids until we dry off."

"Just like what happened with us." Bonnie said.

"Wait, us?" Cleo asked. "You mean, you were effected, too?"

"The three of us got stuck in the Moon Pool's cavern." Elena told them. "You've told us your story, now it's our turn. You're not going to believe it, though."

"Vampires?" Rikki asked. They walking on the path to the boardwalk after Elena and Cleo had dried off. "You have to be kidding."

"I wish we were." Elena said. "But it's true. Caroline and I got turned within a few months of each other."

"Caroline got turned by her doppelganger, Katherine." Bonnie explained.

"An evil twin? Great." Emma groaned. "And you'd think that encounter with Charlotte last year!"

"Actually, it makes sense now." Cleo said. "Bekah's eyes turned red. That's why I fell into the lake."

"Sorry about the surprise there, but you're right. I'm an Original vampire." Rebekah told them.

"Does that mean you're one of the oldest ones in existence?" Emma asked. Rebekah nodded.

"I only changed a few months ago. It's been tough, but I'm okay with who I am." Elena said. Emma put an arm around her shoulder.

"At least you're still Elena Gilbert." She pointed out.

"Wait, why don't you guys sparkle?" Rikki asked.

"Because Twilight isn't reality, sweetheart." Rebekah said.

"So, Bonnie, what about you?" Cleo asked.

"I'm a witch." Bonnie said.

"You've got to be kidding." Cleo said.

"I can prove it." Bonnie said. She looked around to make sure no one was watching. Picked up a chain she'd been carrying in her pocket and a few rocks from the sidewalk. Then she knelt down and set it on the ground. She whispered a small spell and focused her energy on it.

In a few seconds, it turned into what looked like a charm bracelet. The girls were impressed. "You've really gotten good at that." Elena said.

"Thank you." Bonnie said. She handed the bracelet to Cleo.

"Wow. I guess you're one of the good ones." Bonnie nodded.

"The reason we ended up on that island is because Bonnie's old friend Professor Shane led us there." Rebekah explained. "Until false pretenses."

"He claimed there was a cure for vampirism." Elena added. "That's why we ended up there."

"They followed me after I fell into the Moon Pool cavern." Bonnie explained. "That's why we had to take the underwater tunnel out. We met up with the guys at the beach afterward."

"And you know the rest by now, since you've been through it, too." Elena said.

"So it was you that I saw at Mako the other day." Emma said.

"Speaking of, what were you doing there?" Rebekah asked.

"Well, sometimes us girls like to swim out there to get away from everything." Rikki explained. "As I'm sure you know, Emma's a champion swimmer."

"Anyway, I was feeling kind of down about a fight I got into with my family. Swimming usually cheers me up, so I decided to head over the beach." Emma explained. "Then I noticed you swimming out of the Moon Pool. I hid behind a rock and observed from a distance."

"You were watching us?" Bonnie asked. "I had a feeling someone was."

"Then we decided to bring her home with us, since we can't stay out during the full moon for too long." Cleo said.

"What?"

"The Full Moon effects us if we're out in it for too long." Emma explained. "And when we get moonstruck, weird things happen. We lose control of our powers and can't remember what we did the next day."

"Whoa."

"You girls have a lot to learn." Rikki said. "Luckily you've got three experts to help guide you through mermaid training."

"Not to mention the guys." Cleo pointed out.

"Wait, who else knows about this?" Elena asked.

"Only our boyfriends." Emma explained. "They're sworn to secrecy, though. They won't tell anyone."

"Good. Because we're not ready to tell the others about us yet." Bonnie said.

"Others?"

"None of the guys know about our transformation into fish girls." Rebekah said. "I don't know how I'll ever face my brothers if they find out."

"More Originals?" Emma asked.

"Luckily they're both out of town for the time being." Rebekah said.

"Not to mention, Jeremy, Matt, and the others." Bonnie said.

"Meanwhile, we can't let them know about the mermaid secret, and you're going to have to pretend you don't know anything we told you about ours." Elena said. "We promised never to reveal the vampire thing unless it was a true emergency."

"No problem. The three of us can keep a secret." Cleo said. "Right?" Emma and Rikki nodded.

"Thanks, guys." Bonnie said. Just then, Elena got a text message.

"It's Damon. He wants us to meet him at the Boarding House." Elena said.

"Want us to come with for support?" Emma asked.

"Sure." Elena said.

"Actually, I'm going to head home." Rebekah said. "As much as I'd like to be there, I have some studying to do."

"Okay, but meet us at the docks for practice tomorrow." Emma told her. Rebekah nodded, giving her a small smile. Then she left.

The group arrived at the Boarding House. "Whoa. This place is huge." Rikki said.

"It looked a lot smaller from outside." Emma added.

"Yeah, that was my first reaction when I came here the first time, too." Elena said. "It does take some getting used to." They entered the living room, where Damon and Stefan were sitting.

"Hey, guys." Bonnie said.

"We really need to talk." Damon said. He noticed Emma and the others. "What are they doing here?"

"They're with me, Damon." Elena said.

"It's fine. This looks private. We'll wait outside." Emma said. They walked out of the room. They weren't really going outside, but they were waiting in the hallway.

"So, what did you want to tell us?" Bonnie asked

"Your old buddy Professor Shane's back." Damon said. "We don't know if he's still teaching, but we do know he's still at his office."

"How do you guys know that?" Elena asked.

"We spied on him." Stefan said. "We tried to figure out what he was really after, since the cure was a dead end."

"And the whole thing about Silas really was a myth." Bonnie said. "Thank god for that!"

"We were wondering if there was anything at your end."

"No, nothing." Elena said. She felt nervous. How long could she keep this mermaid thing a secret with all this vampire stuff going on?

Damon noticed her discomfort. "You're hiding something." Bonnie glanced over at Elena. Emma, Cleo, and Rikki looked into the room. "What do you know?"

"I can't tell you." Elena said.

"Elena, this is serious." Stefan pointed out. "If you know anything about Shane's plansâ€|"

"I don't!"

"Then what are you hiding from us?" Damon asked her. "Tell us." Bonnie looked at Elena. The girl was still sired to him. Elena glanced at Bonnie, then noticed Emma and the others. She couldn't betray them and she knew it.

"I can't." Elena said, surprised to hear the words come out of her mouth. "I'm sorry, Damon, but I just can't help you here." She walked out of the room.

"What the hell just happened?"

"I thinkâ€|her sire bond's broken." Bonnie said. "I don't know how, but that's what it looked like." She walked out of the house, where Elena had met with the others.

"Elena, you were awesome in there." Emma said.

"Yeah, but I feel kind of strange. It was like, I almost told him the truth about us and then I noticed you guys and managed to fight whatever was telling me to say the truth."

"You're sire bond really is broken." Bonnie realized. "I don't know how, butâ€|"

"I guess we had something to do with it." Cleo shrugged.

"Actually, that's it exactly." Elena said. "I remembered how close all of us were. Even though it's only been a few days, our friendship was enough to break the bond." She frowned, concerned. "Though my feelings haven't changed."

"That's because you already loved him." Bonnie said, sitting next to her. "You loved him before you became a vampire, you just couldn't bring yourself to admit it then."

"How long have you known?"

Bonnie shrugged. "A couple months."

"Well, at least the secret's safe, but this whole thing regarding your Professor concerns me." Rikki said.

"The only way we're going to find out anything is if we work together." Elena said. "I'm not going to lie, it could be dangerous."

"Danger is my middle name." Rikki said.

"You know we'd do anything to help." Emma pointed out. Cleo nodded.

"Then we better start figuring out what his next move is." Bonnie said. "I have an idea, but I'll tell you at practice tomorrow."

"Okay." Emma said.

## 7. The Mermaid Rules

The next morning, the girls met at the docks. Emma, Cleo, and Rikki were already there when Elena, Rebekah, and Bonnie arrived. "Nice of you to meet us here." Emma said.

"Did we have to schedule this for eight in the morning?" Bonnie asked.

"Well, I figured the earlier it was, less risk of people coming down here." Emma said. "That, and it was already worked into our schedule."

"Our Emma is hyper-organized." Rikki explained.

"You haven't changed a bit." Elena smiled.

"Neither have you." Emma told her.

"Okay, let's go over the rules first." Cleo said. "Just so you're all aware of them."

"Well, I'm guessing the first one is be careful around water." Rebekah said. "Otherwise, we turn into fish girls."

"Actually, that is rule number one." Emma said, looking surprised and impressed. "Anyone else want to take the lead on the next one?"

"When it's the night of the full moon, don't look at the moon or its reflection." Cleo said. "It's incredibly dangerous and you'll wake up as though you've blacked out."

"So, how do we do that?" Bonnie asked, looking worried.

"That brings us to the next rule, stick together." Emma said. "Even though it's hard, you three really have to stick together, especially during the full moon nights. Stay over at each other's houses, cover all the windows, and most importantly stay inside."

"And if you do have to go out, make sure to wear those really dark tinted sunglasses we got on that shopping trip." Cleo added. "It should help."

"Also on full moon nights, don't touch water." Rikki added. "That first time, Emma ended up stuck with her mermaid tail and didn't change back until the moon set."

"Any questions so far?" Emma asked.

"I have one, how long before you become immune to the full moon's influence?" Elena asked.

"For us, it took two years." Rikki answered. "But we still have to be careful not to be out for too long."

"That's just our luck. It'll be that much harder to keep this secret, especially since I'm not part of the main group." Rebekah said.

"To be fair, you kind of brought that on yourself." Elena pointed out. "You've flirted with all our boyfriends, you've attacked us, you're the reason I'm a vampire!"

"That last one was self-defense. I was trying to save my family from a murderer who could've killed us." Rebekah said. "If it's any consolation, I'm glad you're not really dead."

"Okay, before this gets out of hand, any other rules?" Bonnie asked.

"No, I think that covers it." Emma said.

"Good, now we can get to the fun part." Rikki said. "Each of you three will be paired up with one of us after you show us what you've got." Elena, Bonnie, and Rebekah looked at each other.

"She means show us your mermaid powers." Cleo explained. "I'll demonstrate." She bent down and waved her hand over the water. As soon as her fingertips were a little above the water, it lifted upward slightly, then went down again, like a very tiny wave.

"You can control water, too." Bonnie said. She bent over and created a small wave similar to the way Cleo had. The two looked at each other and smiled.

Elena waved her hand over the water under where she was sitting. It instantly started to bubble and steam. "Wow," Emma said. "I guess your powers reflect your personality, unlike ours."

"That was my guess too." Elena said. The water stopped bubbling.

"I always figured you were a warm person." Emma said.

Rebekah put her hand just an inch away from the water and concentrated. A small patch of water instantly froze over. "Somehow, this doesn't surprise me." Emma said, using her powers to break up the ice into little snowflake patterns. She and Rebekah looked at each other.

"Well, I guess you're with me." Rikki told Elena. She pointed at the water and created a small steam herself.

"Okay, now that we know who's with who, let's get in there and show them some techniques." Emma said.

"Wait, we're going into the water?" Bonnie asked.

"It's okay." Cleo assured her. "No one's around here."

"Okay." The six of them jumped into the water. When they surfaced, the Mystic Falls girls were surprised they were still human and turned to the others.

"It's only been six seconds." Emma told them.

"Wait, how?" Rebekah began.

"Three|two|one!" Cleo counted, then got cut off as a blue light surrounded all of them.

The next thing they knew, they had changed into mermaids. "Whoa."

"I know. It takes getting used to." Rikki said.

"And apparently changes more than our bodies." Elena said, looking at Rebekah. The blonde Original's hair had been pulled into a tight braid (like in the flashback in Ordinary People). Multiple white, pearls held it together. Somehow, it still looked natural in this form.

Rebekah touched the back of her head, realizing it. "This going to happen every time?"

"Yes." Emma said. "But it'll go back to normal when you're human, or whatever it is you are."

"This would be a good time for you to stop talking." Rikki told her. Emma nodded, for once agreeing with her.

"It's a good look on you, though." Bonnie pointed out. Elena nodded in agreement.

"So, you girls ready to swim?" Emma asked.

"I guess." Bonnie said.

"Just follow us, girls." Rikki said. They all ducked under the water. The new mermaids were really struggling behind them. They re-surfaced beneath the dock.

"Wow, it's hard swimming with fins." Elena said.

"It takes getting used to and a lot of practice." Cleo said.

"Would you believe I've never went swimming in my life?" Rebekah asked.

"Actually, I can believe it." Elena said. Rebekah's swimming was even worse than her own when they were down there. Even Bonnie was slightly better than the two of them combined.

"You weren't doing so hot either." Rebekah pointed out. "Did that accident damage your swimming ability?" Bonnie looked worried. The water around them started to bubble and steam.

"It's not me!" Rikki said automatically.

"Elena." Emma realized. "Elena!" She began to call out.

"You were the reason I drowned after going over that bridge, or did you forget that?" Elena said to Rebekah, sounding more angry with every word. "I know you wanted to defend your family and all, but at the cost of my life?! If Dr. Fell hadn't given me vampire blood, I would've been dead because of you!"

Emma grabbed her cousin's hand, stopping the steam instantly.  
"Enough! People are going to stare under here if you keep it up."  
Elena looked down. She hadn't realized she'd been using her powers.

"Sorry, Em."

"It happens to the best of us sometimes." Rikki said. Rebekah and Bonnie turned to each other as the others spoke with Elena.

"Look, she lost her parents on the same bridge two years ago." Bonnie told her. "Being around there, it doesn't exactly bring good memories for her."

"Ohâ€| I didn't know that." Rebekah said. "I just thoughtâ€| "

"Well, you should think of how your plans effect others besides you and your family." Bonnie said. "Especially now that we're all mermaids." Rebekah nodded, understanding. She'd never been much of a team player, but she knew she was going to have to learn how to be a good one if they were going to keep their mermaid status a secret.

"Okay, maybe it would help if you watched us in the water first." Cleo suggested. "It might help."

"If we have to, we can help you adjust your position, too." Emma said.

"Okay, let's do it." Bonnie said. "Ready, you two?" Elena and Rebekah glanced at each other, then turned to her and nodded. They all ducked back underwater. This time, Elena, Rebekah and Bonnie stayed in place, floating just above the bottom of the lake as they watched the others.

After what felt like ten minutes, they swam over to the girls and helped them out. Bonnie was starting to get the hang of it easily. Emma was getting the feeling Elena was still holding back. She touched her shoulder, giving her a questioning look. Elena pointed up and they both broke the surface of the water.

"I'm sorry, I know I can do better than this." Elena told her after taking a couple breaths.

"It's okay, Elena. But if this is because of what happened to them, you're going to have to get over it." Emma told her.

"I'm trying."

"Well, you're going to have to try a little harder." Emma said. "I miss them, too, but you're letting it get the best of you. You're subconsciously blocking your ability to swim."

"I try not to think about it, but sometimes it creeps back in. Especially when I'm around water." She admitted.

"You remind me of Cleo in the first few days of our change. But you'll be okay. Just trust me on this one. It's time to let go." Elena closed her eyes and pulled herself underwater. Emma followed her under. She offered her hand to her cousin. Elena took it and they started swimming together. She still wasn't quite getting it, but it was a slight improvement.

After a few seconds, Emma let go and helped her adjust her form. Afterward, she had no problem swimming around.

On the other end, Rebekah was still floating in place. Cleo and Rikki went over to her. Cleo took hold of Rebekah's arm, then gestured to Rikki. The strawberry-blonde mermaid swam through the water. Cleo helped Rebekah get into the proper swimming position, then encouraged her to go.

Rebekah was surprised and impressed when she found herself swimming-actually swimming-for the first time in her life. After a few minutes of swimming around, the group resurfaced to take a break. Rikki used her powers to dry them off quickly.

"Never thought I'd be glad to have legs again." She said.

"I'll say. That was the hardest time I'd had in the water since before I was a junior lifeguard." Bonnie said.

"How's it going, guys?" They all looked up.

"Lewis, you're early." Cleo said.

"Figured I'd check in before playing look-out duty." He told them.  
"So, how are the new girls doing?"

"We can hear you, you know." Rebekah said.

"I think they've really made a big improvement." Emma said. "As far as swimming goes."

"She's right. We're going to have to really practice in order to get these powers under control." Elena said.

"No kidding. We don't need another incident like the heating pool disaster a few months ago." Cleo said.

"It was an accident!" Rikki said. "You really think I meant to do that?"

"Maybe we should take a break before we get back in the water." Emma said. They group split up then. Elena, Rebekah, and Emma headed under the shade of a big tree, while the rest went the other direction.

"You really did well down there." Rebekah told her.

"So did you." Elena said.

"Look, I'm sorry aboutâ€|well, everything. I didn't know about your parents. And I've been pretty horrible to you all these months."

"Well, you had your reasons." Elena pointed out. "After all, I'm the one who daggered you at Homecoming. And for the record, I felt awful about it."

"I always hated that dagger." Rebekah said. "But I get why you did it. My brother, on the other hand, would've done it if I'd just looked at a guy. You at least had a good reason."

"That still doesn't make it any more right." Elena pointed out. She got up. "By the way, I wasn't pretending to be your friend back then." Rebekah seemed surprised. "The weird thing about all this is that even when you threatened me, I never saw you as the bad guy. Except maybe those first few months after I turned, but I'm past that now."

"Well, to be honest, I've always sort of envied you." Rebekah told her. "But I guess we're not too different inside. I wish I could make things up to all of you."

"It's never too late to make up with someone." Elena said, holding her hand out. Rebekah took it.

"Sorry to interrupt this moment, but we should probably catch up with the others." Emma told them. "Looks like they just jumped off the dock again." They got into the water and found them.

"What happened?" Rebekah asked.

"Rikki tripped off the pier, so we went after her to make sure she was okay." Bonnie explained.

"I'm more resilient than you think." Rikki said. "And Cleo, you can let go of my arm now. I'm fine."

"Sorry." Cleo said, letting go of her.

"Anything else you want to teach us today?"

"Well, there is one more little thing." Emma said. "Now that you've got swimming down, let's see if we can increase your speed."

Minutes later, the girls found themselves swimming really fast. They resurfaced near a small hill, not too far from Wickery Bridge. "Wow. That was intense." Bonnie said as they made their way to shore.

"Yeah, there's nothing like that feeling of going fast underwater." Rikki said. "It's a real rush."

"It's almost like using vampire speed." Elena said. Rebekah nodded in agreement.

"We normally only use that for emergencies or if we need to get somewhere really fast." Emma told them. She noticed Lewis, Ash, and Zane coming over to them.

"Need a hand, girls?"

"Thanks." Cleo said as they helped the few remaining girls in the water onto the grass.

"It's no problem."

"How'd you even know we'd be here?" Emma asked.

"Lewis called." Ash said.

"And I had the scanner with me." Lewis added, holding it up.

"Well, let's get back to normal." Rikki said. She concentrated on her powers and used them on herself, turning back into a human instantly. Then, she helped Emma and Cleo dry off. Elena did the same with herself, Rebekah, and Bonnie.

"Thanks." Rebekah told her.

"You're welcome."

"Man, it is weird swimming without legs." Bonnie said as the group started toward the road back to town.

"Yeah, but you're better at it than us." Elena said. "Besides, you were a swimming champion back when we were kids."

"Really?" Rikki asked. "That's news."

"Before lifeguard training, she was one of the best junior swimmers in our town." Elena told her.

"Yeah, she was pretty amazing." Emma said. "We used to swim together all the time that summer she tagged along on the Gilberts' vacation."

"True, but that was nothing compared to how awesome you were in the water." Bonnie pointed out.

"Anyone feel like hanging out later?" Zane asked.

"I can't." Rebekah said. The others turned to her. "It's not because of your friends. My brother wants me to look into something. Whoever else was after that fake cure almost had some girl killed."

"Be careful." Elena told her. Rebekah nodded.

"I'm guessing this happens a lot?" Cleo asked.

"Not really." Bonnie said. "It's rare for them to target someone for no reason."

"True, but something about this doesn't add up." Emma said. "First you guys go searching for some fictional cure, then a random stranger is attacked."

"I get the feeling these two events are somehow connected." Rikki said.

"We need to find some answers. Remember, we weren't the only ones on the island that day." Elena said.

"I think it's time we had a talk with Shane." Bonnie said. "And we might need to do some more investigating on that island."

"And we'll be helping you every step of the way." Emma said. "Mako Island's practically a second home to us and if something's going on there, or if this Professor of yours is up to something, you can count us in." The rest of her group agreed.

"Okay, then it looks like we're in this together." Elena said.

## 8. Mako Island

After a few days of training, the group met up at Rebekah's house. "Hey, guys." Emma said.

"So, what's with the early meeting?" Bonnie asked.

"Well, I was swimming off the coast of the beach the other day, and I came across a series of underwater tunnels." Emma explained.

"You won't believe where they lead." Cleo said.

"Well, don't keep us in suspense." Rebekah said.

"One minute I was swimming through one of them, and the next thing I knew, I was just off the coast of Mako." Emma told them. They all seemed surprised.

"Are you sure?" Elena asked.

"Positive. I know what the surrounding area looks like."

"Then maybe it's time we checked it out." Bonnie said.

"What about your meeting with Shane today?" Rebekah pointed out.

"I'll go after helping you guys look. Besides, I found a spell to dry myself off so he doesn't get suspicious." Bonnie said.

A couple hours later, they met the guys down at the docks. "Hey, you made it." Lewis said.

"What are you doing here?" Rebekah asked.

"We figured the search party could use some help." Zane told them.

"Wait, so you guys are going to get all the way to Mako Island in that little speedboat?" Elena asked. Even she was skeptical.

"Of course." Zane said. "Besides, this thing's a lot faster than you'd think. Besides, if you girls get tiredâ€|"

"Thanks, but I think we'll take our normal route." Rikki told him. The girls headed into the water. A few minutes later, they all

following close to Emma. After a few minutes of swimming, she paused, pointing to what looked like a cavern entrance. It looked kind of small, so they all went through one at a time, each one spotting the others as they got out.

Then, they all took off as a group, leaving a trail of bubbles behind them. It wasn't long before they found themselves swimming a few feet away from a coral reef. They all surfaced and saw they were only about a few miles off the coast of Mako Island.

"Wow. It looks so much bigger than I remembered it." Elena said.

"That was some shortcut." Rikki said.

"Finding it was the easy part." Emma said.

"Well, why are we just floating here? We've got a mystery to solve." Cleo pointed out. They all ducked back underwater.

As the group got closer to the island, they found many different types of fish nearby. A small school of them swam past the group. A nearby dolphin greeted them. They smiled, waving to him. It swam up to Bonnie. She smiled, touching its nose.

After spending several minutes underwater, the group finally emerged on the beach, getting their legs back within minutes. "Wow. I see why you three always hang out around here." Rebekah said.

"Yeah, there are a lot of rare species of fish out here." Cleo said.  
"Sometimes we run into a few dolphins."

"Not to mention every once in a while, we'll find some underwater flowers in bloom." Emma added. "Maybe we'll show you one night."

"Sounds awesome." Elena said.

"Let's not forget why we're here." Rikki said. "We should check out the area to see if anyone else has been here besides us recently." They all nodded.

"Should we split up into pairs or stick together?" Rebekah asked.

"I think we should stick together this time." Bonnie said. "No offense, but last time we got split up, we ended up on a wild goose chase."

"Speaking of, did we ever tell you about the time a pelican got loose in Cleo's house?" Rikki asked as they walked further into the island.

"Don't ask." Cleo said when they gave her some strange looks. A few minutes later, they found themselves walking into a forest.

"Hopefully no hidden booby traps will go off this time." Bonnie said.

"Someone set booby traps around here?" Emma asked her.

"Yeah, but that was when we were looking for a cure that did not exist." Rebekah explained.

"Still, that's disturbing." Rikki said. "Apart from the girls, me, Lewis, Zane, and occasionally Ash, no one ever comes out here."

"Well, at least until your professor led you out here." Emma said.

"Okay, first off, we're not college girls yet." Bonnie said. "And second, none of us trust the guy."

They walked until they came across a small stream. "Come on, this way." Cleo said. The others watched as Emma, Rikki, and Cleo jumped across the rock. Bonnie was the first to follow, though she stumbled on the landing a little. Rebekah went next, followed by Elena, who tripped and fell into a hole.

"Elena? Are you okay?" Emma called.

"I'm fine." Elena said. She glanced at the walls. "This place looks a little familiar."

"Down here's the land entrance to the Moon Pool." Cleo explained to Bonnie and Rebekah. "Come on." A few minutes later, the rest of the girls entered and found Elena sitting on the ground.

Emma helped her up. "Nice running into you here." Elena smiled.

"Come on, this area will start to look familiar to you guys soon enough." Rikki said. The girls walked through the tunnel until they found themselves in the room with the Moon Pool.

"This is where we became mermaids." Elena said, recognizing the surroundings.

"Yep. Where it all started for us, too." Rikki said. "It's kind of become our go-to place ever since."

"That small cave you three used to get out is also the underwater entrance to this room." Emma told them.

"Kind of figured, since the entry way led out." Bonnie said. "How do you find it from outside?"

"There's a coral reef that's rainbow-colored close to it." Cleo explained. "It's mixed with shades of yellow, green, and blue."

"It's smart to landmark locations." Rebekah said, impressed.

"Well, we spend so much time swimming around here, it just comes naturally." Cleo said.

"It feels good to be back here." Emma said, looking at the Moon Pool. Suddenly, she was pushed forward and landed in the pool. She surfaced quickly and glared at Rikki.

"What? Don't tell me you weren't thinking about jumping in, too." Rikki told her. Emma looked at her. Then she smiled. She was right, it did feel good to be back in their old hangout spot.

"I guess we could take a small break from looking around." Cleo said. She and Rikki slowly climbed into the water.

"If any of you want to join us, feel free." Rikki told them.

"I should probably stay dry until we leave." Bonnie said.

"I'm going to have to sit this one out, too." Rebekah told them. She didn't want to admit that she wasn't comfortable going into the Moon Pool again.

Elena took off her sandals and climbed into the Moon Pool. Emma moved over a little to make room. "So, you guys come here often?"

"It's one of our favorite places to hang out." Cleo told her.  
"Sometimes it's nice to escape our problems for a few hours."

"I know what you mean, but your problems are still there when you go back." Elena pointed out.

"We know, but by then we normally find a solution." Emma said.

Just then, they heard a sound. "What was that?" Bonnie asked.

"Relax, it's just the guys." Rikki told her. Sure enough, Lewis walked into the tunnels.

"Hey, I think something weird is going on here."

"What isn't weird about all this?" Rebekah asked.

"I mean weirder than usual." Lewis said as Zane entered the room. "We found a few net traps around the island."

"Those were there when Shane led us here."

"Didn't he say he stopped by the island before?" Bonnie asked, remembering.

"You think that creep set up those traps all over the island?" Rikki asked.

"Why would he do that? Even if he did, he knew that none of them would've actually killed us." Elena said.

"Wait, this guy knows!" Emma began.

"He knows about vampires, witches, just about anything that goes bump in the night." Bonnie explained. "He is the Occult professor at Whitmore, after all."

"Why do I keep getting a bad feeling about this guy every time his name comes up?" Zane wondered.

"Probably because he's bad news. Like, really bad news." Rikki said.

"That's it. I'm going to talk with him right now." Bonnie said. "Is it okay if I ride back with you two?"

"No problem." Lewis said. "We're happy to help any friend of these girls."

"Call me if you guys find anything." Bonnie told the others.

"We will." Rebekah promised. Bonnie followed Lewis and Zane out of the cave. Elena pulled herself back up to the land.

"Maybe we should take another look around the island."

"I agree." Emma said. "I don't like the idea of others snooping around this island." Cleo and Rikki nodded.

Back in Mystic Falls, Bonnie was headed to Whitmore when she ran into Matt. "Bonnie!"

"Oh, hey."

"Have you heard from Elena this morning?"

"I'm sorry, I haven't seen her." Bonnie said. "She's probably busy with Emma and the others. I really need to go now."

"Whoa, slow down." Matt grabbed her arm. "Where are you headed?"

"I have a meeting with Professor Shane." Bonnie told him.

"What? Are you crazy? He tried to make you use dark magic!" Matt looked really worried.

"I have to go, Matt. I'm the only one who can figure out what he's up to." Bonnie said. "I trust that him as much as you do, believe me. And since I'm the only one he'll talk to, maybe I can figure out why he lied to us and what he's really after." She started to leave again.

"Bon, wait!"

"Mattâ€|"

"Justâ€|be careful, okay? We don't want to risk losing you again." Matt said. Bonnie smiled.

"I will, Matt. Oh, one more thing, please don't tell the others about this." He looked at her. "You know how they'll react and we'll never learn what he's up to if he's dead." Matt nodded. Bonnie ran off then.

She arrived at Shane's office five minutes late. "Sorry I'm late. I had a few things to catch up on."

"It's okay." She sat across from him. "So, is there anything I can help you with?"

"Actually, I'm here because I can't go through with practicing Expression anymore." Bonnie said. She threw the talisman he'd given her down. "I nearly got all of us killed on that island when I tried using a protection spell."

"Are you sure about this?"

"Yes." Bonnie said firmly. "So, what drew you to that island in the first place?"

"Well, the thing is, I was called in to investigate some strange goings on around there." Shane told her.

"What kind of things?"

"Disappearing boats, people turning up missing, that kind of thing."

"Interesting." Bonnie said, keeping herself neutral. "So, anything else?"

"In the past, there were rumors about these creatures that had supposedly gone extinct. I've been trying to learn more about them, but they're a bit hard to find."

Bonnie knew what he meant. "So, about this whole Silas thingâ€|"

"Oh, that. Well, I didn't mean to give anyone false hope or anything, butâ€|"

"Are you kidding me?" Bonnie asked. "We were all devastated. My mom could've been a witch again, the others would've had their lives back to normal."

"I'm sorry, I didn't think it'd go that far."

"And those sacrifices?" Bonnie continued. "Why kill all those people?"

"The myth is that there needed to be three sacrifices in order for Silas to rise to power."

"So by killing twelve innocent people, along with a group of hybrids was just to add validation to your lie?" Bonnie stood up, furious. "I think I've heard enough for today."

"Bonnieâ€|"

"Don't bother trying to track me down, or I swear, I'll call my friends and they will make sure you die and stay dead." She gave him a cold look before heading out the door.

Meanwhile, Matt was working at the Grill when Damon sat down at the bar. "Let me guess, usual?"

"Better make it a double."

"I'm almost afraid to ask, butâ€|" Matt said.

"Elena's sire bond broke."

"What?" Almost instantly, Caroline appeared next to him. "How? You didn't break up with her, did you?"

"No. I'm trying to get her to tell us about what's been going on, since she and the witch have been M.I.A. recently." Damon said. "For some reason, it didn't work."

"Is it possible it could've broken another way?" Matt asked. "Like another emotion took over or something!"

"No." Damon said. "But she seemed kind of off."

"Well, she's been busy lately, with her cousin and her friends." Caroline pointed out.

"Yeah, but the way Elena was acting," Stefan said, sitting next to his brother. "It was like she was afraid to tell us."

"Weird." Caroline said. "And now that I think about it, I haven't heard a sarcastic comment from Rebekah all week."

"How's that strange? You're one of the few people she likes." Damon pointed out.

"It's not just her, both Elena and Bonnie have been blowing me off." Caroline said. "It's like there's something going on with them."

"And you think Rebekah might be part of it." Stefan said.

"Well, one thing I know is if that's true, she's not compelling them." Matt said, returning to the counter. "Bonnie can't be compelled and Jeremy and I made a new necklace to protect Elena after she turned. I gave it to her the night you guys left for the island."

"Yeah, but even if she can't, why is she spending so much time with them? Something tells me it's not just to get information."

"Look, we're all frustrated, Care." Stefan pointed out. "But if they're hiding something from us, they must have a good reason for it." Caroline rolled her eyes. "Hey. They're your friends and you've known them longer than any of us. Whatever they're up to, they'll tell us when they're ready."

That night, the group minus Rebekah met at Elena's. "I can't believe him. He admitted to arranging both those murders just to cover up his stupid lie." Bonnie said. She was still really angry.

"Yeah, though it doesn't explain the Hunter thing." Elena said.

"He said he got a witch to fake the markings." Bonnie told her. "Besides, in case you haven't noticed, Jeremy's tattoo is gone."

"How is that possible?" Rikki asked.

"The only way that kind of spell can fade is if the witch who cast it

died." Bonnie said.

"Too bad Rebekah couldn't be here." Cleo said. "She's still trying to track person who almost killed that wolf girl."

"Trust me, we all have a reason for wanting to, but it wasn't us." Elena said.

"And this Professor of yours said that he heard all these legends about Mako. Including beings thought to be extinct?" Emma asked.  
"What if he means us?"

"What do you mean?"

"Well, there are all these old fish tales, none of them necessarily having anything to do with our island, butâ€|" Cleo said.

"The real reason he led us there could've been to see if the legend was true." Elena finished. "To see if mermaids were real."

"We've got to be really careful about traveling to Mako from now on." Emma said. "Until Shane is dealt with, we've got to try and live as normal as possible." Everyone nodded in agreement.

End  
file.